

DCF LEGISLATIVE TESTIMONY



3/10/2021

TESTIMONY OF

Tanya Keys, Deputy Secretary
Kansas Department for Children and Families

TESTIMONY ON

2019-2020 Foster Care Report Card

Chair

Baumgardner

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Erickson

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Sykes

and

Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to present information on the 2019-2020 annual education report card for students in foster care. I want to begin by expressing our appreciation for Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) collaboration and effort on this project producing the important information in this report.

This annual education report card for students in foster care is an opportunity for DCF and the KSDE to learn about student outcomes in a way we have not experienced in the past, advancing educational priorities and support for foster youth. We engaged KSDE this past summer to begin the process of report design and matching foster care data to KSDE’s education data and look forward to continued collaboration improving educational continuity and outcomes.

Ensuring educational stability and positive educational outcomes for children in foster care is a high priority for DCF as reflected in practice, policy, and implementation of applicable law. This annual report requirement has formal origin in the Governor’s Executive Order #20-53 on July 7, 2020 and is proposed for codification in SB 51 which recently passed the Senate and has been referred to the House Committee on Education.

The 2019-2020 report reflects differences in outcome achievement for students who are foster care compared to all students. We know there is work ahead to identify and understand factors influencing the outcomes, success and gaps in systems or supports that create pathways for parity in outcomes for students who experience a foster care episode. We appreciate KSDE maintains datasets to download on their website. Through these datasets, DCF plans further analysis this spring for each subject by USD and other attributes. Initial observations in this report include:

- The percentage of students experiencing foster care who graduate with a diploma in 4 years is nearly 28 points lower than the percentage of all students in Kansas. (n=61% in foster care compared to 88% of all students).
- Graduation with a diploma in 4 years by race of students reflects foster care students who identify as white experience the greatest difference of. graduation rate (n=58% in foster care compared 91% of all students)
- Comparing 2018-2019 report data for Math Assessments to data on KSDE website for all students, more students in foster care (50%) tested at Level 1 limited abilities for post-secondary readiness compared to 28% of all students who are at Level 1 post-secondary readiness in Math.
- The greatest assessment level parity (closest range in figures) between foster care and all students occurs in Level 2, a basic ability to understand and use the skills and knowledge needed for Postsecondary Readiness.
- 2018-2019 Assessment Comparisons for foster care (FC) data to all students (AS) is:

Assessment Level	Math		English Language Arts		Science	
	FC	AS	FC	AS	FC	AS
1	51.25%	28.29%	52.20%	29.45%	55.09%	34.85%
2	36.34%	39.05%	31.80%	33.95%	27.82%	29.58%
3	11.55%	23.25%	13.61%	27.86%	13.85%	24.53%
4	1.84%	9.39%	2.37%	8.72%	3.21%	11.03%

Using datasets from the KDSE website, DCF will perform deeper analysis of assessment levels by subject level, grade, subgroup populations, demographics, USD and other possible attributes to understand possible points of focus and differences to inform strategies and dialogue around improvements. For example, a quick query by USD reflects a 27-point difference for children in foster care in Olathe 233 in math assessment Level 1 when compared to all Olathe 233 students. (n=47% FC, 20% AS.) These datasets will become a terrific baseline to compare any data from the 20-21 school year.

We understand Kansas is among the first states in the nation to implement such an annual report and we look forward to deeper review, dialogue and learning from this data. As we strive for continuity of education and strong outcomes, improvements have occurred in practice approaches and procedures we hope impact positive outcomes in future years of this report.

- The Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care Workgroup comprised of members from DCF, KSDE, Kansas Association of School Boards and each foster care case management Educational Coordinator positions meet monthly to problem solve matters and identify best practices. On January 21, the workgroup had presentation of this report. At their March 18th meeting they will discuss next steps for learning more about data and supporting local districts and conversations with more local data points.
- Foster care case management agencies implemented action plans and DCF policy was changed to require the education enrollment form is completed within 3 days of a move so that a receiving school knows the 2 prior schools to contact for record transfer. This activity occurs when a child is unable to stay in their same school after a move.
- As part of the action plans, each Case Management Provider captures data and develop a report on the number of moves, the number of moves that required a school change and enrollment form.
- Placement stability has improved the past year, reducing the rate of moves for children in foster care to 5.0 which is closer to the national performance rate of moves of 4.4 or fewer per 1,000 days in care.
- DCF includes and tracks success factor measures of same school attendance and grade promotion to complement and provide context to continuity and stability of education.

We appreciate the opportunity this report presents and the dialogue it generates to improve outcomes. We look forward to creating meaningful reports so conversations can occur locally. DCF is committed to using this data and insights to improve policy and practices to achieve better outcomes for all foster youth. There is much to learn about the impact of a child's stay in foster care on outcomes and level assessments. Thank you for the opportunity to provide information on this first annual report. I am happy to answer any questions at the appropriate time.